

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 01165 021448Z
ACTION SS-25

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R 021415Z AUG 77
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T JERUSALEM 1165

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, JO, PLO, IS, XF
SUBJECT: WEST BANK POLITICAL ATTITUDES

REFS: (A) AMMAN 4093, (B) 4233 AND (C) 4335

1. WE HAVE READ WITH INTEREST AMMAN'S REPORTING ON RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH ABU ODEH, HAZAM NUSEIBEH, AND FAROUK TOUGAN THROUGH WHICH RUNS THE THEME THAT WEST BANKERS, IN REALITY, DO NOT SUPPORT THE PLO BUT SECRETLY PREFER ASSOCIATION WITH JORDAN. IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT ALL THREE DISPLAY A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF WISHFUL THINKING AS A RESULT OF THEIR PRO-HASHEMITE BIAS, (OF THE THREE, ABU ODEH APPEARS TO BE MOST REALISTIC AND PLO'S CURRENT STANDING ON WEST BANK.)

2. POST HAS REPORTED THAT WEST BANKERS EXPECT SOME ROLE FOR THEMSELVES IN ANY FUTURE PALESTINIAN ENTITY AND THEREFORE FORSEE SOMETHING MORE THAN A

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GOVERNMENT RUN SOLELY BY RETURNING PLO OFFICIALS. WE DISAGREE WITH TOUGAN'S STATEMENT THAT "PREFERRED OPTION IS FOR SOME FORM OF RELATIONSHIP WITH JORDAN."

3. MOST WEST BANKERS WOULD LIKE TO HAVE GENUINE SELF-DETERMINATION WHICH WOULD RESULT IN AN

INDEPENDENT STATE. MANY FAVOR AN INTERIM REGIME AFTER ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WHICH WOULD ENABLE PALESTINIAN EMIGRES TO RETURN AND HAVE INDIGENOUS POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS DEVELOP. OUT PRESENT BEST ESTIMATE IS THAT SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD RESULT IN MELDING OF PLO'S RETURNEES WITH PRESENT WEST BANK ELECTED MUNICIPAL LEADERS. ONLY AFTER INDEPENDENCE IS ACHIEVED DO A MAJORITY OF WEST BANKERS WANT TO DECIDE ON RELATIONSHIPS WITH JORDAN AND PERHAPS WITH OTHER ARAB STATES. AS REPORTED EARLIER, ALTHOUGH THIS MAY BE UNREALISTIC, THIS IS WHAT WEST BANKERS PREFER.

4. FOLLOWING ARE COMMENTS ON CERTAIN POINTS RAISED IN REFTELS:

(A) WE WERE STRUCK BY ABU ODEH'S REPORT ISRAELIS HAD ASKED HIM TO IDENTIFY GOJ SUPPORTERS ON WEST BANK SINCE THEY HAD HAD TROUBLE LOCATING THEM. THIS REQUEST SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

(B) WE AGREE WITH TOUQAN (PARA 8 REFTEL B) THAT WEST BANKERS DO NOT TRUST OLD TRADITIONAL NOTABLES ANY MORE. ONE OF FEW WEST BANK NOTABLES OF STATURE, FORMER MAJOR OF HEBRON JAABARI, WHO WAS COURTIED BY GOI AND GOJ, IS NOW TERMINALLY ILL.)
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WE DO NOT AGREE THAT WEST BANKERS HAVE NOT YET DEVELOPED ANY KIND OF NEW LEADERSHIP WHICH IS COHESIVE AND REPRESENTS WHOLE WEST BANK. DESPITE EFFORTS JORDANIANS AND ISRAELIS TO PERSUADE THEMSELVES OTHERWISE, THE NEWMAYORS ELECTED IN 1976, DO REPRESENT THE VIEW OF THE PEOPLE WHO FREELY VOTED THEM INTO OFFICE. WHILE DIFFERENCES EXIST AMONG THEM, THE LOWEST POLITICAL DENOMINATOR ON WHICH THEY UNITE IS "THE PLO SPEAKS FOR US."

(C) WHILE CERTAIN MAYORS HAVE RECENTLY SHOWN AN INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING AT GENEVA (QAWASIMI-JERUSALEM'S 1144), WE DOUBT THEY WOULD DO SO IF THE PLO WERE TO OPPOSE SUCH A DEVELOPMENT. SIGNIFICANTLY, EVEN QAWASIMA RESISTED THE IDEA OF BEING PART OF A JORDANIAN DELEGATION.

5. WE BELIEVE SOMETHING CAN BE GLEANED ABOUT THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION ON THE WEST BANK WHEN A MODERATE CHRISTIAN SUCH AS MAYOR FREIJ OF BETHLEHEM IN A PUBLIC SPEECH ADVOCATES

THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT WEST BANK/
GAZA STATE UNDER THE PLO.
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